

PRESS RELEASE

# Baker-Polito Administration Awards Grants to Improve Massachusetts Farm Food Safety

**21 Grants Will Help Farmers Upgrade Food Safety Operations**

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Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

MEDIA CONTACT

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**Katie Gronendyke**

**Phone**

617-626-1129 (tel:6176261129)

**Online**

[katie.gronendyke@state.ma.us](mailto:katie.gronendyke@state.ma.us) (mailto:katie.gronendyke@state.ma.us)

**BOSTON** — The Baker-Polito Administration today awarded \$300,000 in grants to 21 Massachusetts farms to install practices that improve food safety within their operations. The Agricultural Food Safety Improvement Program (AFSIP) is a competitive grant program that allows agricultural operations to complete food safety upgrades on their farms, enabling the operations to meet buyer demands, increase consumption of local food and protect public health by reducing food safety risks.

“As the demand for locally grown food continues to grow, farmers have an increasing need to improve their operations to meet marketplace demands and safety requirements,” **said Governor Charlie Baker.** “Our administration is proud to continue supporting Massachusetts agriculture by helping produce farmers proactively implement upgrades to ensure that food safety risks are managed, marketplace needs are addressed, and their businesses continue to grow.”

“Improving food safety practices and equipment is necessary to ensure Massachusetts’ farmers are producing the highest quality produce for consumers across the Commonwealth,” **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito.** “These grants help farmers modernize their operations and strengthen the local food supply in a safe and sustainable way.”

This program focuses on assisting produce operations as they work towards upgrading on-farm infrastructure and equipment to meet regulatory requirements under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), third party audit requirements required by buyers, and general farm food safety improvements to minimize food safety risks from harvest to market.

“By ensuring that our agricultural businesses have the tools, technical assistance and financial support to manage food safety risks, the AFSIP grant program helps ensure the Commonwealth has access to fresh, local food that is grown and harvested according to food safe practices,” **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton.**

“A goal of our Department is to help keep the Massachusetts’ food supply safe and secure. Assisting farmers through both grants and technical assistance help modernize their operations, open new market channels, and meet regulatory requirements for both the good of the farmers and for consumers,” **said Department of Agricultural Resources**

**Commissioner John Lebeaux.** “We are committed to the goal of ensuring food safety from farm to table.”

The following local farms are receiving grants through AFSIP:

Farm Name	City	County	Award	Project
Atlas Farm, LLC	Deerfield	Franklin	\$10,750	Washing Line
Dargoonian Bros. Farm, Inc.	Andover	Essex	\$14,500	Bird Netting in Produce Packing Area
Allandale Farm, Inc.	Chestnut Hill	Suffolk	\$25,000	Post-Harvest Equipment; Washable Surfaces
Joe Czajkowski Farm	Hadley	Hampshire	\$10,000	Upgrade Packing Area
NaMac Farm	Haverhill	Essex	\$9,800	Wildlife Fencing
Tangerini's Spring Street Farm, Inc.	Millis	Norfolk	\$25,000	Washing & Packing Upgrades
Lakeside Organic of Hadley, LLC	Hadley	Hampshire	\$10,750	Produce Storage Upgrades
Davidian Bros. Farm	Northborough	Worcester	\$25,000	Apple Dunk Tank Replacement

Farm Name	City	County	Award	Project
2 Friends Farm, Inc.	Attleboro	Bristol	\$18,500	Automated Washing & Sterilization
Freedom Food Farm, LLC	Raynham	Bristol	\$24,000	Produce Washing & Storage
Friends of Holly Hill Farm, Inc.	Cohasset	Norfolk	\$5,090	Wash Stand
Kielbasa Orchards, LLC	Hadley	Hampshire	\$1,875	Plastic Apple Bins
Heart Beets Farm	Berkley	Bristol	\$1,500	Produce Washer
Dick's Market Garden, Inc.	Lunenburg	Worcester	\$25,000	Washing & Packing Facility
Mycoterra Farm	South Deerfield	Franklin	\$25,000	Walk-in Cooler
Kettle Brook Farms	Charlton	Worcester	\$12,000	Plastic Bins
Manheim Farm	South Deerfield	Franklin	\$11,235	Parsnip Washer; Vegetable Cull Area

Farm Name	City	County	Award	Project
New Entry Sustainable Farming Project	Dracut	Middlesex	\$6,400	Portable Restrooms; Washing Line; Portable Hand Washing
Bardwell Farm	Hatfield	Hampshire	\$3,600	Harvest Equipment; Cleaning Tools
Little Brook Farm & Garden	Saugus	Essex	\$25,000	Washing & Packing Facility
Slip Away Farm	Edgartown	Dukes	\$10,000	Washing Station; Walk-in Cooler

“I’m thrilled to see so many farms in the Hampshire, Franklin, Worcester district be awarded grants to improve food safety,” **said State Senator Jo Comerford (D-Northampton)**. “Western Massachusetts is the breadbasket of the state, and these grants will help our farmers to continue growing the fresh, local produce that our food system relies on.”

“These grant awards show the state’s commitment to both local farms and consumers across Massachusetts,” **said State Representative Daniel Carey (D-Easthampton)**. “It is an excellent opportunity for these farms to upgrade their facilities and equipment ensuring the best possible fresh, local food is available. I am especially excited to see farms across the state receiving awards, including several in western Mass.”

“One of the most important things we can do to maintain the health and well-being of our constituents is to ensure that their food is processed safely,” **said State Senator Dean A. Tran (R-Fitchburg)**. “I thank the Baker and Polito Administration for their continued efforts to ensure that the residents of the Commonwealth can live healthy lives.”

“This \$25,000 grant from the Department of Agricultural Resources will help Dick’s Market Garden continue to be able to offer high quality, locally grown produce to their customers,” **said State Representative Jennifer Benson (D-Lunenburg)**. “I want to thank the Baker-Polito Administration for their support of small, family-owned farms in my district and across the state.”

By implementing eligible upgrades, the farms will be able to protect public health, sustain public confidence in the food system, meet buyer requirements, and follow new regulations under the Federal Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

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## Media Contact

### Katie Gronendyke

#### Phone

617-626-1129 (tel:6176261129)

#### Online

[katie.gronendyke@state.ma.us](mailto:katie.gronendyke@state.ma.us) (mailto:katie.gronendyke@state.ma.us)

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The Department's mission is to help keep the Massachusetts' food supply safe and secure, and to work to keep Massachusetts agriculture economically and environmentally sound.

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